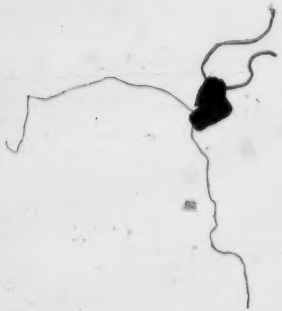
7: Furnivall
642, 647, 648, 471

Southeast Asia ALl

[For a theoretical discussion of the necessity for granting political autonomy to the colonial dependencies of western states and the required changes in administrative practices and economic policy, see cat. 116, pp. 468-512; for discussion of the relationship between the colonies and the colonial powers in the modern world, and the author's proposal for international collaboration in preparing the colonies for eventual independence, see pp. 513-550.]



7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

Enquiry' by Wellenstein, a technique has been developed for turning to the best account such statistics as have any bearing on native welfare.[1]

Lord Hailey has remarked that in Africa the existing statistics might be considerably improved without additional expense, and that a comparatively small expenditure would make them much more useful. That remark applies also to Burma and probably to most other tropical dependencies. Unsatisfactory as the statistics for Netherlands India are in some respects, they do at least serve to illuminate many corners that are left dark elsewhere, and the general neglect to provide means for judging how far the benevolent aspirations expressed in statements of colonial policy bear fruit in practice, naturally affords a handle for critics of colonial administration to suggest that it is more keenly interested in economic progress than in native welfare. It is not enough that material should be available for measuring individual welfare. The analysis of welfare demands a suitable technique for measuring social welfare by presenting accurate and intelligible information regarding debt, civil litigation, crime, health, education and other matters that find no place in individual budgets of income and expenditure. There would still remain imponderable elements, those cultural and religious aspects of social life in the tropics which are the first to suffer from the economic struggle for survival of the cheapest consequent on the impact of the West. But this is no reason for neglecting to carry so far as possible the objective scientific measurement of welfare.

4. The Machinery of Welfare

The deficiency of statistical material is a notable defect in the machinery of welfare. But it is not the only, and not the chief, defect. It may seem that no special machinery is necessary, that the care for welfare may be left to the local official charged with the maintenance of order. That is very largely true. Any European official can tell the people that dirt breeds disease, or explain the benefit of vaccination, or advise them to destroy mosquitoes and rats, or bring to their knowledge new and more profitable crops, or suggest new breeds of cattle, or inculcate the advantages of thrift and the danger of getting entangled with money-lenders. None of the most urgent reforms in the daily life of tropical peoples calls for special scientific equipment beyond the stock of knowledge common to educated Europeans. Natives have frequently

[1] Furnivall, *Economic Journal of India*, 1934, p. 295.

F: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

adopted of their own accord innovations which appeal to them, and it would seem possible for European officials to recommend European standards of hygiene and other reforms with little or no expenditure on welfare services. It is true that modern science has done much and can do more for the welfare of tropical peoples. The connection between rats and plague and between mosquitoes and malaria are recent scientific discoveries, and scientists have traced the origin of hookworm and beri-beri. There is unbounded scope for research, and useful expenditure on it is limited only by the funds available. But it is well to remember that research does not bear fruit until it is applied to daily life; its practical application depends on the efficiency of the machinery of welfare.

It is true also that administrative officials should be better able to promote welfare if they have the assistance of departmental specialists. But departmental specialists will usually need the help of administrative officials if they are to get into touch with the people in their daily life. The departmental specialist is probably an expert in his own line, but one can hardly expect him also to be expert in native economy and customs or to be proficient in native languages. It is useless for the medical officer to advocate shoes for hookworm if the people cannot afford to buy shoes, or for the sanitary department to devise modern latrines which the people will not use, or for the agriculturist to recommend crops which local conditions of labour or water supply do not allow the people to grow. Although the specialist may try to adapt native life to scientific principles, the administrative official should be capable of adapting scientific principles to native life. Thus the welfare specialist must ordinarily work in double harness with the administrative official by his side. But the administrative official can do little to promote welfare unless he knows the locality, and what needs doing; has influence that will lead the people to attend to his advice; and remains among them long enough to make certain that they act on it. All these conditions must be fulfilled if welfare work is to succeed.

The machinery ordinarily employed differs according as the system of rule is direct or indirect. In the adoption of direct rule one object was to promote greater welfare through liberating the people from arbitrary oppression by their own chieftains. On this plan all the administrative officials, European and native, became servants of the law, charged with administering equal law to all. When it became apparent that the law, while liberating the people from arbitrary will,

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

subjected them to mechanical economic forces, attempts were made to protect them against the action of these forces. That is the distinctive character of welfare machinery under direct rule; it allows free play within the law to economic forces, but attempts to mitigate their consequences. This is directly contrary to the method of indirect rule, systematized by Van den Bosch in Java, which tries to soften the impact of economic forces by leaving the people under their own chieftains and their own customs, while aiming to protect them against arbitrary oppression. Direct rule attempts to mitigate the action of economic forces; indirect rule aims at providing a buffer against their action. There is a corresponding difference in the machinery of welfare.

(*a*) *Direct Rule.* It is often suggested or implied that the promotion of welfare in the tropics requires nothing more than the provision of funds for the services of experts. But this view disregards the conditions limiting their activities. The application of science to the affairs of daily life is quite a novel idea even in Europe; each generation of doctors regards its predecessors as unscientific, and in agriculture, hygiene, dietetics and other studies, what is held for true to-day may be out of date to-morrow. But the tropics are still almost virgin lands in science; experience in Europe may be misleading and conclusions based on it invalid. Conditions are different or even contrary. Cultivation requires a cool soil instead of a warm soil; natives apparently maintain good health on a diet that, according to western science, is defective; plague and malaria were spread by measures intended to prevent them. The application of modern science to tropical problems requires long and patient research, and continuity of experiment. But tropical life is adverse to continuity; men go on leave or are transferred for administrative convenience. Lack of continuity nullified experiments on rice cultivation in Malaya, and official transfers hampered the researches of Ross on malaria. Moreover, any single problem may, and often does, require a whole staff of experts for its solution. In agriculture the investigation of a single crop disease may need the collaboration of agricultural experts, botanists, entomologists and so on. The same principle applies in almost all departments of economic and social life. If the agricultural expert, by patient research breeds a more productive variety of some generally grown crop, the people may be unable to take advantage of it because of difficulties in the supply of labour, water or credit; his work raises new problems for a wide circle of other departmental specialists and it will be wasted without their co-operation.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

657
654
177
647

It is easy, given the funds, to multiply economic and social services. But the multiplication of service tends to defeat its own ends, and greater expenditure gives worse results through excessive departmentalism. Each specialist looks at life through departmental blinkers. The agriculturist sees nothing but the crops, the veterinary expert only the cattle; to the sanitary inspector the latrine is more important than the home, and the policeman would guarantee security more confidently if the whole population were in jail. Often the experts are at issue. The agriculturist advocates grazing reserves to provide fodder, while the veterinary officer wants to close them to prevent infection; the fishery officer advises the people to breed fish, and the medical officer drains the ponds to kill mosquitoes. Everywhere the specialist inclines to a narrow view of life, but in the tropics departmentalism has peculiar dangers; in Europe the expert looks at a familiar world, but in the tropics, owing to his ignorance of native life, the field is out of focus. In Europe the expert understands the public and the public understands the expert, because they have a common background, but in the tropics it is only the European community in the towns and western enterprise that has a mutual understanding with the expert and values his assistance. Thus the natives in towns prefer to live in the native quarter, where they can escape the unwelcome attentions of the sanitary inspector, 'whose unreasonable prejudice against picturesque filth is never understood';[1] and plantation coolies, on returning home, lapse into their old comfortable ways. Moreover in Europe there is an organic community, living its own life, which can decide for itself what it wants most; but in the tropics, where innovations are pressed on the people from outside, there naturally ensues a lack of co-ordination between the competing and often contrary activities of the departmental specialists; too many cooks, as usual, spoil the broth. The confusion may be mitigated on the Dutch plan by grouping allied services in large departments under a single head. But this device alone is insufficient. What an organic community does by the dynamic force of its inherent vitality must in the tropics be entrusted to some official personifying, as it were, the common social will. There must be someone to co-ordinate the activities of departmental specialists and to foster a demand among the people for their services.

641

Under direct rule the District officer, the local civil servant in charge

[1] Burns, p. 306.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

647

of general administration, is expected to discharge these functions, and to act as a link between the experts and the people. One condition of success is that he should have an intimate acquaintance with tropical economy. So far as he is assisted by native subordinates, they should so far as possible understand these principles of western social life which they are expected to spread among the people. In both these matters Dutch standards are far higher than the British.[1] It seems that training for the British Colonial Service has lagged behind that given by Holland, France and Belgium. Yet the Colonial Service can claim to be ahead of the Sudan and Indian, as well as of the Home Civil Service in this respect. The British system of training administrative officials is a survival from the days of *laissez-faire* when an officer was expected to do little more than try cases and collect the revenue. Tropical administration has never been regarded, like law and medicine, as a profession requiring vocational instruction. European officials while on probation undergo a short course which does not give them any background for their work, and in Burma and probably elsewhere, native subordinates receive no training whatever—a university degree or proficiency as a clerk is regarded as sufficient qualification for administrative work. In Netherlands India, on the contrary, European civil servants are given a five years' course designed to help them to understand the East, and native civil servants a three years' course designed to give them an understanding of the West. Moreover, Dutch officials in Java, for some twelve years after their arrival in the country, have no judicial or executive authority, whereas British officials from their earliest days are primarily magistrates and collectors of revenue; they have neither the training, nor the practical experience, nor the time to acquire the general understanding of native life that is necessary if they are to help departmental specialists to turn their activities to the best account.

But the most thorough preliminary education in tropical economy will avail little without local knowledge, local influence and opportunity to exercise effective supervision. For all these continuity of tenure is essential. Under direct rule, however, there is no permanent element in the administration. In Africa an officer in Kenya was posted to as many as eleven different districts within six years, and the problem of frequent transfers exists possibly in a more acute form in West Africa. This is characteristic of tropical administration in

[1] *African Survey*, p. 224; O'Malley, p. 255. Furnivall, *JRCAS*, July 1939 *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, May 1938, p. 273; 1946, Cmd. Col. 198, p. 22.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

• 647 general, and is found also in Dutch, French and Belgian dependencies.[1] A contrast is often suggested between modern conditions and the 'good old days'. Yet in Burma, though the numerous transfers were deplored sixty years ago, no remedy has yet been found. In India, in the placid days before the Mutiny, the normal period of service in any one post seems to have been eight or nine months, and that was the case also in Burma under the East India Company, right back to the first years of British rule.[2] Lack of continuity is universal and inveterate.

'Universal experience shows that lack of continuity in the administrative services produces one inevitable result—the decay of the factor of personality and the substitution of a mechanical routine of administration.'[3] One symptom of routine is that everything must be reduced to writing, and as far back as we can go we find this symptom of the disease; and always, so great is the lack of continuity in tropical administration, we find it, as at present, deplored as something new. Eighty years ago in Burma officers were complaining that, if reports continued to multiply, officials might be found to write them, but no one would have time to read them. In 1830 the East India Company framed rules to reduce correspondence. Still earlier Munro complained that 'unless we contrive to reduce the quantity of reading the members of Government will have no time for giving consideration to matters of general importance'.[4] We have no time to think, says the harassed official of the present day, but his predecessors have always made the same complaint, since the time of Sir John Shore (Lord Teignmouth) in 1790: 'The members comprising it (the British Government in India) are in a constant state of fluctuation and the period of their residence often expires before experience can be acquired or reduced to practice. Official forms necessarily occupy a large portion of time, and the constant pressure of business leaves little leisure for study and reflection.'[5] What is new in modern administration is that more is attempted, and the machinery is therefore more elaborate and more obvious. Specialization multiplies departments and concentrates co-ordination in the secretariat, which functions as a clearing house for departmental activities. That is a mark of Dutch administration as much as of British administration, perhaps even more deeply imprinted because the Dutch system is more intensive. Dutch officials, like

[1] Bousquet, p. 109; *African Survey*, pp. 231, 237, 243.
[2] *RAB*, 1880–1, p. 8; *RRA*, 1899–1900, p. 53; Bright, I, 101.
[3] *African Survey*, p. 231.
[4] Gleig, p. 321; *Corr. TD*, pp. 2, 85.
[5] *5th Report Select Committee*, 1812, p. 11; O'Malley, p. 193.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

647

their British fellows, deplore the concentration of authority in the secretariat, and complain that they spend the first fortnight of each year reporting what during the past year they have seen, done—and reported. Nowadays there is more machinery, but the administration has always functioned mechanically because there has always been a lack of continuity and it must needs function mechanically unless informed by human will.

Transient officials cannot possibly acquire the local knowledge that is necessary for promoting welfare. The District officer must know the district of which he is in charge. Natural forces, such as erosion, operate continually but gradually. So also do economic forces, leading to indebtedness and land alienation, to the disappearance of communal land in villages and to overcrowding and disease in towns. Sometimes remedial action might be possible in the early stages, but officials come and go, and they notice these things, if at all, only when they can do nothing to cure them.

A knowledge of the district is of little avail without a knowledge of the people. The British tradition of colonial rule may undervalue the study of tropical economy as academic, unpractical, but it recognizes, at least in theory, the importance of an acquaintance with the local inhabitants; it portrays the District officer as 'the father and mother' of his people. Yet where officials follow one another at intervals of a few weeks or months, it takes a wise child to know its father; and the father cannot have any close acquaintance with his family or families, the bewildering succession of adopted foundlings.

Unless the District officer knows the people he cannot exercise personal influence. The need for personal influence was recognized in the recent proposals for mass education:

> 'Guidance and leadership are clearly of the first importance. The effective guidance given by governments will depend on the vigour and sincerity with which those responsible for government face their task and recognise their responsibility, not only towards the people as a whole, but as inspiring leaders of the agencies which the Governments themselves directly or indirectly control. Of these agencies the district officers have a crucial part to perform. Their close and varied contact with the lives of the people affords unique opportunities for fruitful guidance. In effect they can largely make or mar the efforts of welfare workers and other departmental officers.'[1]

But, as we have seen, although the contact of district officers with the people may be varied, it can hardly be described as close. Under the

[1] *Mass Education*, p. 9.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

647 system of direct rule the only people with whom the ordinary district officer becomes acquainted, outside his court and office, are those who push themselves forward in the hope of a decoration or a job; he may meet people in the villages, but he has no time or leisure to make friends among them, and appears to them as an official rather than as a man.

In order to acquire the personal influence needed for the promotion of welfare among a backward people, sympathy is essential; one must share their feelings. Yet one cannot share the feelings of people whom one does not know, or knows merely in the mass and not as individuals; sympathy requires more than mere acquaintance through official intercourse during a few months. Moreover, under direct rule the official is primarily a magistrate and tax collector, and that has long been recognized as a barrier to sympathy. As Munro observed, a man posted to judicial duties 'learns forms before he learns things. He becomes full of the respect due to the Court but knows nothing of the people. He has little opportunity of seeing them except in court. He sees only the worst of them and under the worst shapes; he sees them only as plaintiffs or defendants or as criminals, and the unfavourable opinion with which he too often enters among them, in place of being removed by experience, is every day strengthened and increased.'[1] It is a common complaint that under indirect rule, in Java or Malaya, officials coddle the people, treat them as children; but under direct rule they are apt to treat them as naughty children.

Without sympathy for the people among officials, there can be no confidence in officials among the people; they will not confide in one unless they know him as a man. In Burma the mistrust of officials is accepted as a fact, and is often ascribed to the native tradition that Government is one of the five enemies of the common man. It is more comfortable to attribute this mistrust to the character of the people rather than to defects in the administrative machinery; but one finds the same mistrust in India, where the people have known British rule for longer even than in the maritime provinces of Lower Burma. While writing these pages an instance comes to hand. 'It is pathetic', remarks an observer of the recent famine in Bengal, 'to see the crowds of destitute lying on the Calcutta pavements rise and scatter when they are approached by anyone who looks like an official'[2]—not neces-

[1] Gleig, p. 27.
[2] *Daily Telegraph*, 2 Nov. 1943.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

sarily, of course, a European official. The same report tells of an official who was lynched by the peasants whom he was trying to provide with food. That is not the atmosphere in which a constructive welfare policy can flourish. 'It is significant', says Lord Hailey, 'that a sentiment of alienation or estrangement has rarely shown itself in the earlier days of British administration.'[1] But there must be something wrong with the machinery of welfare if people like it worse as they get to know it better, and one defect certainly is the lack of continuity in the administrative services.

Even if an official can gain sufficient influence to induce the people to accept reforms, his work is incomplete. He must remain long enough to see that they adopt the reforms, not merely because they trust him but because they recognize their value or come to accept them as a habit. Take, for instance, the matter of erosion. An official who knows his district may detect it in an early stage; if he has influence among the people he may induce them to abstain from the cultivation or wood-cutting that is causing the erosion. The cultivators may promise to allow the scrub to grow, but some years must elapse before there is any noticeable difference, and all the time they will be subject to the lure of making a small addition to their income. One or two will succumb, and others will follow their example. If an official who is keen on sanitation tries to enforce housing rules that will improve living conditions but reduce rents, the owners of house property know that they need only bide their time, because he will soon be replaced by some new official with other interests. Successive officials may be zealous for education, for co-operative credit or for sanitation; but, as each one leaves the district, nothing remains of his enthusiasm but a new layer on the dust-heap of abortive projects. Not unnaturally, many lose their early enthusiasm and lapse into cynical indifference, content just to carry on. But, while successive welfare projects fade and are forgotten, anti-social forces, natural and economic, hold the field.

It is comparatively easy for officials to promote economic progress. If an official begins to build a road, although it may and often does relapse into jungle after his departure, a successor, if so minded, can easily go on with it. But in the promotion of welfare, as for example by founding schools or promoting co-operative credit, continued personal influence is indispensable and, as the Dutch remark, when this is withdrawn, everything sinks back into the mire.

[1] *Britain and Her Dependencies*, p. 36.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

•647 It is easy likewise to promote reforms that are immediately and demonstrably profitable to individuals; these indeed require little recommendation. Good wine needs no bush. But the reforms most urgently needed for promoting welfare impose unwelcome restrictions on the people and offer distant and doubtful benefits; such reforms require close and constant supervision if they are to be adopted into native custom. The District officer, like the departmental specialist, can do something to further economic progress, but the conditions under which he works make it almost impossible for him to promote native welfare.

Under direct rule, which implies the rule of law, the District officer is further hindered in promoting welfare by the fact that all his actions must be kept within the law. In the promotion of welfare as in the collection of revenue, he is as closely bound by legal procedure as in the trial of cases in court when sitting as a magistrate or judge, and he must be prepared to defend his acts against trained advocates who will insist on the letter of the law.[1] The same rule applies to all departmental subordinates. They are liable to legal penalties if they exceed their functions, but are exposed to little risk, and, as we have seen in Burma, may add appreciably to their income, if they fall short of them. It is improbable that in this matter Burma is exceptional. Under inadequate supervision the multiplication of welfare services means the multiplication of corruption, and the subordinate who takes a small gratuity to condone the breach of welfare regulations acquires merit with the public at the same time that he fills his pocket. Hence the expenditure of revenue on social services may even promote corruption rather than welfare, and impose new burdens instead of conferring new benefits. Every elaboration of the machinery of welfare calls for closer supervision by the District officer and, at the same time, increases the difficulty of supervision. Unless the District officer knows the district and the people, he can rarely penetrate the conspiracy of silence which conceals such irregularities, and if he hears of them he does not hold charge long enough to punish them. Under the rule of law, suspected offences must be proved according to forms of law, which operate to protect offenders. Moreover, the difficulty of action by the District officer is enhanced because he has little or no authority over departmental subordinates, as these are directly responsible to their departmental superiors. Thus, although it may seem that specialist services should assist the District officer to promote welfare, they are often, in

[1] O'Malley, p. 96.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

fact, of very little use. The most urgent welfare measures require no more than common sense. If the District officer has sufficient local knowledge and influence he can induce the people to accept them and, without this knowledge and influence, the multiplication of subordinates is a hindrance rather than a help. Thus the machinery of direct rule, which served originally to mitigate oppression in the native world, does not fulfil the conditions essential to the promotion of welfare in the modern world.

(*b*) *Indirect Rule.* Under the system of indirect rule the promotion of welfare is approached from a different angle. This system accepts the position that western rule in the tropics liberates anti-social economic forces from the control of custom, and thereby produces changes that are detrimental to native social life. 'So far as deliberate policy can affect the issue', writes Lord Hailey with reference to Africa, 'it is clear that in the interests of the African himself, it should seek to moderate the pace of change, and allow full scope for the innate characteristics of the people to assert themselves in the conflict of forces that must ensue.'[1] That may be claimed as the principle underlying the policy of indirect rule. The functions and limitations of the departmental specialist are the same under indirect rule as under direct rule, and on both systems the officer in charge of general administration serves to link up departmental specialists with the people. But on the system of indirect rule some native authority, assumed to represent the people, can exercise personal influence among them and is more or less permanent. Indirect rule would seem, therefore, to comply better than direct rule with the conditions for promoting welfare.

As already noticed, there is a wide difference between the Dutch and British interpretations of indirect rule. On the original Dutch model, which still dominates their conception, the 'recognized or appointed heads' were regarded as native chieftains, and, so long as they maintained order and complied with Government requirements for produce and services, they were left to govern the people according to native law and custom with no interference from European officials. Since then western law has been adopted for all classes in criminal proceedings, and taxation along western lines has replaced the customary dues and services, but the officials of the administrative service in Java, whether European or native, try no cases (with insignificant exceptions), and have no formal connection with either magisterial or revenue work. British colonial

[1] *African Survey*, p. 1280.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

647 administration, however, even under indirect rule, derives its inspiration from the tradition of equality before the law that took shape under direct rule in British India. European administrative officials do not, like those in Dutch territories, approximate to the character of the Resident in a Native State, but take an active part in judicial and revenue work, while even the native chieftains tend to be converted into western magistrates and tax-collectors. The system of indirect rule as thus interpreted differs little from direct rule, because the native officials are, in effect, subordinate to Europeans, who supervise the revenue collections and hear cases on appeal from native courts or transfer cases from native courts to their own courts.

Although indirect rule is advocated as an instrument of welfare, the choice between direct or indirect rule has, in practice, been governed by convenience rather than by principle. In general, as we have seen, direct rule has tended to prevail where the colony was regarded primarily as a market to be developed by native enterprise, and indirect rule where it was chiefly valued as a source of raw materials to be developed by western enterprise. This coincidence between the economic interest of the colonial power and the system of rule adopted, suggests a need for caution in accepting the claims advanced for indirect rule as an instrument of welfare. Although now advocated as a means of moderating the pace of change, it won favour originally as a means of expediting change, by facilitating the supply of land and labour through native chieftains. Moreover, few would desire to protect the people wholly from the impact of the West, to segregate them and preserve them as museum pieces in native innocence and ignorance. In order to reconcile progress and welfare, tropical peoples should be brought as rapidly as possible into fertilizing contact with the principles that western civilization derives from Greece, Rome and Christianity, while given protection against the anti-social forces that its impact on the tropics liberates. Indirect rule, however, strictly applied and as originally conceived, has a contrary effect; it cuts the people off from western civilization and keeps them backward without giving them adequate protection against economic forces. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that this is largely responsible for the helplessness of the Javanese which strikes foreign observers[1] so forcibly and is deplored also by the Dutch, and which contrasts so notably with the vigorous enterprise that has impelled Burmans to colonize the delta, even if it also helps to fill the jails.

[1] Bousquet, p. 86.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

647

The older negative conception of indirect rule, however, has given place generally to a positive conception of its value as a means of inducing people to accept innovations intended to raise their standard of living. Here again, one cannot disregard the fact that the acceptance of this new interpretation coincided with the recognition by western enterprise that it required more efficient labour, healthier and more intelligent, and by western labour that its interests were endangered by the competition of cheap tropical labour. These practical considerations added weight to human sympathy, and European officials began to force the pace of welfare, using the native authorities merely as agents to obtain compliance with measures regarded, for the time being, as desirable. Thus the system of indirect rule becomes infected with the disease characteristic of direct rule: the infirmity of will and vacillation of policy consequent on frequent transfers. Moreover, every new use of native authorities to introduce unwelcome reforms strains their authority, on which the system of indirect rule is founded. And unless the native authorities themselves wholeheartedly accept new measures, they will not enforce them when the Government changes its policy, or the officer who recommends them leaves the district, so that compliance is superficial and impermanent. Usually, too, indirect rule is born a weakling. For the native chieftain recognized by the colonial power is the weaker among rival claimants, who seeks or accepts outside support because unable to stand alone. With the help of the colonial power he may be strong enough to place land and labour at its disposal, but this does not strengthen his position among his subjects. More and more, as time goes on, he derives authority from the Government rather than from the people, and it is the form rather than the reality of native institutions that indirect rule preserves.

Even under Dutch rule European officials have in fact interfered in native administration whenever convenient. During the period of the Culture system 'they did not debate whether action would prejudice village autonomy; they acted'. Under the Liberal system they bypassed the Regents in order to protect the people against oppression. Under the Ethical system, intended to strengthen the corporate village, Europeans, zealous for uplift, used the village administration as 'welfare apparatus' until 'precious little autonomy remained'. The conservation of village life and custom has always been a fundamental principle of Dutch administration; departures from this principle have been regarded as unorthodox and have been followed by a reaction to

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

the old tradition, but the temptation to intervene has repeatedly proved irresistible. Under the tradition of direct rule in British India, and with a greater veneration for the rule of law, British officials are less disposed to resist the temptation, so that, in British practice, indirect rule loses its virtue and vitality, and tends to become little better than a sham, differing from direct rule chiefly in the name. The Dutch who tried intervention for some twenty years during the Ethical period were finally disillusioned, and came to recognize that it was mistaken. There seems little reason to anticipate better success under British rule.

Yet the principle underlying indirect rule is valuable. A native authority whom the people accept as representing them personifies their common social will. He has great influence to recommend reforms in which he himself believes, and he remains permanently among the people to supervise their application until they have been adopted into customary social life. But he can do this only so long and so far as he is the prime mover and has the chief direction in affairs. A leading Dutch civilian has suggested that whereas, during the Ethical period and earlier, the European official was the 'elder brother' or overlord of the native official by his side, it has become necessary for the European to accept the position of 'younger brother', as adviser and assistant rather than a chief executive. On this plan the chief defect of colonial administration, lack of continuity, becomes a virtue. The native authority is permanent, but of necessity cannot be in immediate and continual close contact with the modern world, and a succession of European officials can put before him various new points of view and make suggestions among which he can choose those that are congenial and seem feasible. This process, however, works slowly, and requires that the native authority shall be at home in the western world. Some form of pressure or compulsion seems easier and quicker.

5. Compulsory Welfare

It does not require an extensive acquaintance with contemporary colonial literature to note a growing tenderness towards compulsion as an instrument of welfare. There are demands for compulsory education, for the compulsory destruction of diseased crops and cattle, for campaigns against disease by operations, scientifically planned and humanely conducted, but military in spirit and thoroughness. For the common welfare men living in society must accept restrictions on individual freedom. In tropical society the people under their own rulers

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

177 welfare, and it seems not unreasonable to assume that similar results will follow in the tropics. Schools, sanitary regulations, the improvement of agriculture, and so on, appeal to humanitarians as likely to improve individual welfare, and by making for economy in administration and business, they appeal to reason as well as to sentiment. Naturally colonial governments conceive of welfare on western lines, and administrative practice is concentrated on enhancing the welfare of the people as individuals.

These attempts to promote welfare are effective only so far as the people will respond to them. The West may scatter pearls, or what it takes for pearls, about the tropics, but the people will not pick them up unless they appreciate their value. Scientific agriculture, modern schools, western medicine and sanitary regulations may not conduce to, and frequently conflict with, what the people regard as welfare, but if they cannot get what they want they must take what they can get. Agricultural and other economic services may enable them to earn more as individuals; modern schools may provide their youngsters with 'a decent job'; they may adopt some western foods or remedies for illness, and they may, perhaps, go to hospitals to be cured of their complaints. But these are all individual benefits, and have no relation to welfare as a social good. Welfare consists essentially in harmony between the individual and the environment; the environment must allow him to obtain both what he knows he wants and also what he wants without being aware of it. Economic progress enlarges the possibility of welfare by increasing the command of man over material resources, but it profits the native as an individual only so far as he participates in the larger surplus, and it enhances his welfare only so far as it contributes, directly or indirectly, to the enrichment of his social life.

8. Welfare and Autonomy

647 There is, as we have noticed, a growing recognition of the complexity of welfare problems. 'The problems of development touch upon the 657 work of officers in various departments, such as administrative officers, both at headquarters and in the districts, and the technical officers in the 654 agricultural, veterinary, medical and other services. There is need for machinery to provide complete co-ordination between these separate 177 departmental staffs.'[1] The health officer finds that he must seek assistance from the chemist and entomologist, and the veterinary officer

[1] 1940, Cmd. 6175, p. 7; *African Survey*, p. 1612.

7: Furnivall G-4,5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

looks to the forest officer to provide grazing for the stock. As experts come more and more to recognize the need for special knowledge outside their own branch of study, there is an increasing demand for the creation of new services, and welfare work is distributed among departmental officials who are unable to see life as a whole. At the same time there is a growing recognition that all aspects of life are closely interrelated. In Malaya the improvement of paddy is found to require co-ordinated action by the agricultural irrigation, co-operative credit, education and other services.[1] In Nyasaland the Welfare Committee comprises representatives of the Medical, Agricultural and Public Works Department together with non-officials. In Southern Rhodesia there is a Director of Native Development in charge of all native affairs.[2] The Dutch in Netherlands India minimize sectionalism by grouping the various services in large departments and, further, link up some of the departments by liaison officers. All these expedients may improve the co-ordination of the welfare machinery. But it still remains machinery, and acts mechanically on the people taken in the mass as an aggregate of individuals. Each group of specialists takes snapshots of the people from its own angle, but the composite photograph obtained by fitting the results together bears as little relation to the native world as a Hollywood film to life. It shows native life from an alien western standpoint and, however lifelike, it never comes to life. The more elaborate the machinery, the more mechanically it functions, driven by economic forces and not by human will. Improvements in the administrative machinery merely effect reforms which adapt the people better to the economic forces that dominate life in tropical dependencies. Evolution along this line leads to a dead end. It is the type of evolution characteristic of the lower forms of life which have survived by adapting their way of life to their environment; to adapt his environment to his way of life is the prerogative of man, and reforms adapting him to an uncongenial environment produce not harmony but discontent. The impact of the West has liberated forces which were formerly kept under control by custom; for the enhancement of welfare it is necessary that the people shall be enabled to regain control over these forces, that they shall regain their former autonomy. That a higher standard of welfare is a condition of autonomy is alleged as one ground for the elaboration of welfare machinery. But improvements in welfare machinery resemble improvements in applied science. Research in applied science may increase the efficiency of

[1] Mills, pp. 255, 262.

[2] *African Survey*, pp. 1197, 1227, 1230.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

current practice, but the great scientific achievements come from research in pure science, which revolutionizes practice by attacking old problems along new lines. Similarly the elaboration of welfare machinery can have no appreciable effect on welfare, and still less can it promote autonomy. It will not give them what they want unless they want what it can give, and the promotion of welfare must be approached from a new angle by a revolution in method. The machinery is not only defective, but is applied on a wrong principle.

But, in the modern world, how is it possible for tropical peoples to get what they want? For the environment has changed, and not the people; they still, if left to themselves, would try to reproduce their old environment. But they have been brought into contact with the modern world and cannot get away from it. All the king's horses and all the king's men cannot set the clock back. They can get what they want only if they want what in the conditions of the modern world they *must* want. A fundamental problem of autonomy is to change the people so that they shall come to want, or at least voluntarily to accept, those conditions which the welfare of the modern world requires. Some light should be thrown upon this problem from an examination of attempts already made to introduce self-government among dependent peoples in various projects of colonial autonomy.

9. AUTONOMY

Colonial autonomy is closely linked with the Liberal tradition, which had two aspects. On the economic side it stood for economic freedom, freedom of person, property and trade; on the political side it stood for freedom of thought, speech and religion. Political freedom was regarded as the natural fruit of economic freedom. In the nineteenth century Liberalism was in the air. British and Dutch colonial statesmen alike claimed Liberal ideals though interpreting them differently; French Liberals recognized their colonial subjects as citizens of France, and Liberalism in Spain, suppressed at home, took refuge in the Spanish territories overseas.

During a great part of the century Liberals in Britain thought colonies a burden, and often cited Turgot's dictum comparing them to fruit that would fall from the parent tree when ripe. Men looked forward to the day when India should be able to stand alone as the proudest day in the story of British rule. Practical administrators like Sir Thomas Munro argued that when Indians were sufficiently enlightened to frame a regular government for themselves, it would

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

during the present century, the convergence of Liberal, Ethical and Nationalist ideas, together with considerations of practical convenience, led in 1918 to the creation of the Volksraad, introducing western institutions in the central government. The new Dutch constitution of 1922 recognized the autonomy of Netherlands India in principle, and, as subsequently formulated in 1942, Dutch policy looked forward to the reconstruction of the kingdom 'on a solid foundation of complete partnership' among all the members.[1] Thus circumstances have dragged the Dutch, for long almost reluctantly, along the track blazed by the British. In Dutch as in British dependencies, colonial policy has sought to make the people capable of self-government by substituting natives for Europeans in the administration and by the construction of western self-governing institutions, and in both alike partnership has come to be recognized as the goal of policy.

10. Personnel

The application of Liberal principles to tropical administration may be dated from the revision of the charter of the East India Company in 1813. Liberal orthodoxy expected Government to confine its activities so far as possible to the maintenance of law and order. On that view it was not illogical to hold that the substitution of Indians for Europeans in the law courts would take India a long way towards self-government. Merely of necessity this process was already making great strides forward. The system of direct rule, inaugurated by Warren Hastings, was completed when Cornwallis took over civil and criminal jurisdiction from native authorities. It soon appeared that the Company could not afford to entertain a sufficient European staff, and Lord Hastings considered various expedients, including the revival of *panchayats*, for dealing with the pressure of business. The easiest and cheapest solution was to train natives as magistrates and judges. They were employed in courts of first instance and, under Lord Amherst, in appellate courts. By 1827 over 90% of the original suits in civil cases were tried by native judicial officers. Thus the employment of Indians was 'rendered imperative by the cost of a purely English administration'. But it was also regarded as 'a great moral duty'.[2] 'With what grace', asked Munro, 'can we talk of our paternal government, if we exclude them from

[1] *Netherlands India*, pp. 82, 84, 109, 160; Broek, J. D. M., *Pacific Affairs*, 1943, p. 338.

[2] Ross, p. 202; Boulger, pp. 60, 64, 67; *IG*, IV, 45.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

647 every important office?'[1] The great Liberal reformer, Bentinck, was heartily in favour of the employment of Indians, and, on the renewal of the Company's charter in 1833, this view found expression in the memorable pronouncement that no one should be excluded from any appointment in India by reason only of his colour, creed or race. This principle has always since then been 'adopted by the Government and people of England as a cardinal point in their Indian policy'. It may be claimed that it has been steadily applied. By the end of the century there were Indian judges on various provincial High Courts, while 'the European element in the government was confined within the limits essential for efficiency and guidance', and was employed chiefly where special knowledge or requirements were needed, or where 'as in the case of the Police, a large measure of European control was essential'.[2] But although the administrative personnel was so largely manned by Indians, India was no nearer to self-government. In this matter there was still, says Mr Curtis, 'almost everything to be done. You will not have done it, or begun to do it, merely by substituting Indian for English officials from the Viceroy downwards.' Such a Government might even be further from self-government, because an English Viceroy, merely by the circumstances of his birth and upbringing, is better able to treat with members of the Home Government as one of themselves on equal terms.

Indians were indeed less capable of self-government at the end of the century than at the beginning. In the early years of the nineteenth century India was merely a geographical expression; politically it was a congeries of native states and British territories; the former were self-governing and in the latter the machinery of government was little more complex than in native states. But, with economic progress, the administrative system was unified and centralized at Calcutta, while the machinery of government grew more complex and the art of government more intricate and difficult. As soon as a Government wants to do anything beyond maintaining law and order, it needs experts who can do these things: engineers for the roads and railways, irrigation and drainage; geologists and mining engineers; agricultural and veterinary officials; doctors and schoolmasters. It needs a larger staff, and especially a much larger staff of native subordinates. The multiplication of special services leads to departmentalism. Even in Europe, where the public services have grown up in response to social demand, the delays and obstructions of bureaucracy are a common

[1] Gleig, p. 307. [2] *IG*, IV, 45.

7: Furnivall G-4, 5 (no date) 1948 AL1 Southeast Asia AL1

theme of complaint. But in India and other tropical dependencies, they form the framework of a huge western superstructure over native life, wholly foreign to the people. Not only is there less self-government, but less government than before, because the machinery is too vast and complex to be informed by human will.

The multiplication of native officials is, therefore, no measure of the progress of self-government, but rather the reverse. In Europe the public services provide what the people want, and a comparatively small staff suffices to give them what they want; but in the tropics the much larger staff necessary to obtain the compliance of the people with innovations that they do not want constitutes a hindrance to self-government.

The inverse relation between self-government and the multiplication of native officials is illustrated by the system of indirect rule. Under this system there is a much greater measure of self-government than under direct rule, and one of its advantages is that it does not require so large a staff. During the nineteenth century in Java, when the Regents and villages managed their own affairs, few officials were employed. But, with economic progress, and the influx of foreign elements, there is a demand for the introduction of western law and western amenities, and accordingly far more judges and magistrates and the multiplication of special services. Thus, as native officials become more numerous, native self-government decays. On the other hand, as happened in Siam, an independent country can employ a large number of European officials without ceasing to be self-governing. So long as the Government remains an instrument of foreign rule, the increasing association of natives in every branch of tropical administration is no index to the progress of self-government.

II. Machinery: Local Government

Together with the increasing association of natives in the administration, Liberals placed their faith in the 'gradual development of self-governing institutions'. Local self-government is, of course, no new thing in the tropics. From very early times tropical rulers have allowed foreign traders in the ports to settle their own affairs in their own way according to their own laws. It was in accordance with this principle of 'like over like' that Europeans in India and other parts of the tropics were allowed, and required, to maintain order among their own community. But modern self-government on a western pattern is the child of sanitation. It was owing to trouble over town conservancy